The most Lamentable and Deplorable

HISTORY

OF THE

Two Children in the Wood:

CONTAINING

The happy Loves and Lives of their Parents, the Treachery and barbarous Villany of their Unkle, the Duel between the murdering Ruffians, and the unhappy and deplorable Death of the two innocent Children.

As also an Account of the Justice of GOD that overtook the Unnatural Unkle; and of the deserved Death of the two murdering Ruffians.

To which is annex'd,

The Old SONG upon the same.

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The Lamentable and Deplorable

HISTORY

OF THE

Two Children in the Wood, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of the Original of Father and Mother of the two Children, and his Family, &c.

THE Subject of this History is the Deplorable Death of two Children left in a Wood, where they most miserably perish'd: How they were brought thither, and came to that unhappy End, shall be at large declared in the Sequel of this History; in which, that we may proceed the more regularly, we shall first give and Account of the Parents of those two innocent Sufferers.

Their Father was a Gentleman of a plentiful Estate in the County of *Norfolk*, not far from *Castle-Rising*, an ancient Burrough-Town in that County, tho' at present much decay'd: This Gentleman was descended from the ancient and honourable Family of the *Trueloves* in that County, and bore the Name of *Arthur True-*

Truelove, having only one Brother whose Name was *Nicholas*, but of a far different Nature from his Brother; *Arthur* being every way a compleat and sweet natur'd Gentleman; belov'd by every one, and deserving every ones Love; of a free, courteous, and affable Temper; one that kept a good House, without being Prodigal; there being no want of any thing necessary, nor any Waste or Superfluity: but *Nicholas* was on the contrary, of a sordid morose sullen Temper, of a cloudy Countenance, and very unsociable and discourteous; and accordingly met with the like Treatment from his Neighbours. But notwithstanding all his Defects, his Brother, who was all Love and Sweetness, carried it to him with all the Respect and Tenderness imaginable.

Mr. *Arthur Truelove*, who was eldest Brother, liv'd a considerable time a Batchelor, so that his Brother *Nicholas* was married and had two Sons before him, and could have been well contented that his Brother *Arthur* would not have married at all, being of a very covetous and sordid Temper, and thinking too much of all that any one had besides himself. But Mr. *Arthur Truelove* thinking it would be better and more comfortable for him to take a Wife, began to look out after one; and in a little time found one according to his Wish; for as soon as he had declar'd his Intentions to marry, he soon had Wives enow offer'd him; but none pleased him so well as one Mrs. *Jane Townsend*, the Daughter of an honourable Gentleman in that County, whose Conditions were so suitable to his, that they seem'd made for one another: But I will let alone her Description till the next Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How Mr. Arthur Truelove *courted Mrs.* Jane Townsend; *her Beauty and Parts described: And how they were afterwards married.*

I Have said in the foregoing Chapter, that Mr. *Truelove* lik'd none for a Wife so well as Mrs. *Jane Townsend*; and you will not wonder at the reason of his Choice, when I have told you what a one she was: But how shall I do that, when she was such a one as did inflame all Eyes that look'd upon her; and well she might, for in her Eyes Love sat inthron'd; and full of Majesty sent forth such glorious Eye-surprizing Rays, that she was thought the Wonder of the Age. All that beheld her, (and all that cou'd behold her,) did make their Eyes quick Messengers to their Minds, to let them know that they had seen the utmost of Perfection; and so might well despair of ever meeting with a fairer Object: And yet her Body though so truly fair, was but the Casket of her fairer Mind: Her Beauty was indeed esteemed by all but by herself; and to herself it seemed but vain and trivial, for she preferr'd the Beauty of her Soul before it. And to say truth, the Beauty of her Body (tho' hardly to be equal'd in the World) were far inferiour to those excelling Vertues of her Mind: Humility shin'd brightly in her Carriage, and Pride, that Bane of the Fairest, was at as great a distance from her as it was from Vertue.

And now judge, Reader, whether Mr. *Truelove* cou'd have made a better Choice: Nor did he spend much time in Courting her: Those vain and foolish Compliments that others were so taken with, were what she never

never would admit of. The real Worth that they were both Poſſeſſors of, ſoon equally attract'd one another: So that ſoon after the happy Conſummation of their Marriage, compleated both their Joys. And one expreſt their Happineſs on this occaſion in the following Lines:

So joys the Pilot that hath ſcap'd a Grave,
In the ſwell'd Boſom of an angry Wave;
And after all his ſhipwrack'd Hopes, at laſt
Doth ſafe in Port his joyful Anchor caſt:
Which hath occaſion'd many pious Airs,
And been the Subject of his daily Prayers;
Nor did they live until this happy Hour,
In which their Joys were all within their Power.

To ſpeak of the Solemnity and ſplendid Entertainments at their Wedding, with all the Triumphs that attended it, wou'd be to hold a Candle to the Sun: For to ſay nothing cou'd be wanting at it, is but to ſpeak diminutively of it: Three Elements at leaſt were rifled to ſerve up the Variety of which their Wedding-dinner did conſiſt; and univerſal Joy and Satisfaction was ſeen in every Countenance; expreſſing the glad Hearts of all the Gueſts: Only his Brother *Nicholas* ſeem'd to wear a cloudy Brow, and appear'd melancholy unto that degree, that it was taken notice of by ſeveral; but he excus'd it by pretending ſome Indiſpoſition; which thoſe that knew him beſt, thought he had no occaſion to excuſe, it being only the Effect of his own natural and moroſe Temper; of which his Brother took no notice, for his fair Bride had took up all his Thoughts.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

How Mr. Nicholas Truelove *grew very melancholy after his Brother's Marriage, and of the Kindness of his Brother and Sister to him.*

IT is observed by Naturalists, that Spiders will suck Poison from the self-same Flowers, from whence the better-natur'd Bee will extract Virgin Honey: Just so it was with Mr. *Nicholas Truelove*, the Marriage of his eldest Brother, which was a general Occasion of Rejoycing to all others, gave him the greatest Discontent imaginable; of which, (whatever his Pretences were) this was indeed the true and only Reason: His Brother *Arthur* having liv'd a Batchelor till about thirty four Years of Age, he had fondly conceived that he wou'd never marry; and then by Consequence all the Estate his Brother had, wou'd fall to him and to his Children: But now his Brother marrying a fine and beautiful young Gentlewoman, by whom he cou'd not doubt of having Issue, and thereby seeing all his Hopes defeated, the mighty Disappointment overcame him, and touch'd his covetous and sordid Temper to the Quick: So that his Discontent became too visible to be dissembled; which his Brother perceiving, was very sensibly afflicted at it; and wou'd be often asking of him what was the occasion of it; but *Nicholas* as much as possibly he cou'd avoided speaking to him; and by endeavouring to hide the Malady, made it the more apparent.

It happened some five or six Months after Mr. *Arthur Truelove* was married, that his Wife's Pregnancy began to be apparent, and gave the joyful Parents assured

hopes of Iſſue, his Lady finding herſelf quick with Child; with which glad Tydings, they both rid one Day to their Brother's Houſe, there to communicate their News to him, that he might be a Partner in their mutual Joy: At their firſt coming, their Brother gave 'em a kind Welcome, and ſeem'd very glad to ſee 'em; but when his Brother told him that his Wife was quick with Child, he cou'd not for his Life hide his Reſentment; for 'twas to him the moſt uncomfortable News cou'd have been told him, and his Heart fainted at the very hearing on't; ſo that the Blood retir'd from all the outward Quarters of the Body, to give its beſt Aſſiſtance to the Heart, and left his Looks all pale and languiſhing; and that which moſt of all confounded him, was that his Brother and Siſter, were Witneſſes of his Diſorder; but though they ſaw he was ſuddenly chang'd, they knew not upon what account it was, and were as far from thinking any Evil, as from deſigning it; for nought but Vertue, Peace, and Innocence, in their fair Souls cou'd find a Habitation; and far from thinking what the real Cauſe was, ſeem'd very much ſurpriz'd at his Diſorder; and ſtrait order'd his Servants to ſtep and call their Miſtreſs, to bring ſome comfortable Cordial for their Maſter, who by degrees came to himſelf again, hoping (as it fell out) that they wou'd attribute his ſudden Illneſs to ſome other Cauſe, than that from which it did indeed proceed. His Brother and his Siſter were indeed extreamly troubled to ſee him out of Order; and asking of him how he did? He reply'd, Something better, and that it was only a ſudden Fit of his old Melancholy. This gave his Brother a fair occaſion to ſpeak thus unto him:

My

My dear Brother, You know of all the Children of our Father, there's only you and I that now survive, and in the World there's not a Man that I esteem before you; then why shou'd you thus hide your Griefs from me? If there be any thing that troubles you, let me but know it, and I'll contribute all that lies within the Compass of my Power to give you Ease: And if 'tis a Distemper that thus disturbs you, let me intreat you to look out betimes, and get a Remedy, before it proves too hard for the Physician.

To which his vertuous Wife added immediately, *Pray Brother seek out presently for Cure; for Melancholy is a bad Distemper, and so much worse than other Sickness for this Reason: That those that have it ne'r are weary of it. Be willing, Brother, but to leave it, and the Cure is half perfected. Come to our House and stay there for some time, and ride abroad a Hunting with my Husband: This will be some Diversion for you. At other times, I'd have you go to* London, *and I don't doubt but that the News you'll hear each Day at the Exchange, and the Diversions of the Court and Park, will go a great way to effect your Cure. And as your Brother told you but just now, if there be any thing lies heavy on you, communicate it freely to your Brother, and I am sure you need not doubt of having his Assistance, whatever the matter be.*

These free and generous Speeches of his Brother and Sister, altho' he cou'd not but take very kindly, and yet did he wish they never had been spoken; for 'twas no other than heaping of fresh Fewel on his Head. He knew not how after such Kindnesses shew'd, to harbour those black thoughts he had before; and therefore finding they had no mistrust of the true Cause of all his Melancholy, he put on something a more chearful Air, and made 'em this Reply:

My dear Brother, I must confess that you've been always kind, above what other Brothers use to be; and therefore I shou'd be the most ungrateful amongst Men, shou'd I be wanting in my just Acknowledgements; or have one thought within my Breast, I shou'd not make my Brother privy to: But as Distempers come without our leave, so neither will they go, but when Heaven pleases. And if sometimes I do appear to indulge it, 'tis as my Sister very well observ'd, the melancholy Constitution I am subject to, inclines me so to do. But my dear Sister (addressing himself to her) *I am resolv'd to take your Counsel, and come and see what Cheer you keep at home, and go sometimes a hunting with my Brother, and use all means I can to conquer this so troublesome Distemper.* And so began to be more merry with them.

CHAP. IV.

How Mr. Nicholas Truelove *went afterwards to his Brother's House, and seem'd to be recover'd of his Melancholy, during which time, his Brother's Wife was deliver'd of a fine and lovely Boy.*

AFter this kind Visit made by Mr. *Arthur* and his Lady to his Brother *Nicholas*, manifesting so much Kindness to him, he had a strange confusion of Thoughts within him; his wicked Purposes were stagger'd, and he began to boggle at the Execution of his wicked Designs: For he had once resolv'd to kill both his kind Brother and his Wife, that so he might be Lord of his Inheritance; but this unatural Resolution (upon his cooler thoughts) began to be too horrid in his Eyes; as well as it had too much Danger in it: He knew his Brother and his Sister's Vertues, had made 'em well belov'd by all the Country, and had few Enemies; and that

if ſuch a Fact ſhou'd be commited, 'twou'd be a thing impoſſible to hinder the Diſcovery: But now their Kindneſs had ſo over-come him, that the Ingratitude of ſuch an Act, was by his better Genius, ſet forth in its true Colours to his Soul, which had not yet loſt all remainders of Humanity: He alſo thought that time (which in each Age produces mighty Alterations) might bring about his black Deſigns by ways leſs hazardous; and that he might obtain his Ends without that load of Guilt, which ſuch a horrid and infamous Action muſt needs have brought upon him.

Having thus ruminated in himſelf, he puts on the moſt pleaſed Countenance he cou'd, and told his Wife (who was a Woman that deſerv'd a better Husband, and unto whom he never durſt communicate the leaſt of thoſe black thoughts that haunted him) that he intended to go ſee his Brother, and repay him his kind Viſit, and there ſee if he cou'd divert himſelf, and ſhake his melancholy Humour off: Which the good-natur'd Gentlewoman was extreamly glad to hear, and ſeconded his Reſolution all ſhe cou'd.

When he came to his Brother's, he was received by him and by his Siſter, with all the Kindneſs that was poſſible; who were extreamly glad to ſee him look with a ſerener Air than he was wont to do; and told him they rejoyc'd to ſee him ſo much mended. To whom he pleaſantly reply'd, He'd took his Siſter's Counſel, and was come thither to divert himſelf, and ſhake his Melancholy off. His Brother was well pleas'd with what he ſaid, and nothing was omitted which might contribute to ſo good a Reſolution: He went a hunting often with his Brother, and viſiting of other Neighbouring Gentry, who now began to have a greater Kindneſs for him, then e're they had before. But

But now the time was come for the young Lady to be brought a-bed, and through the kind Aſſiſtance of *Lucina*, was ſafe deliver'd of a young Son, to the great Joy of all the Family. But that which was the Father's Joy became the Brother's Grief; for by this Heir, he ſaw himſelf and Children diſpoſeſt of what he had ſo long eſteem'd his own; and could not ſo contract his angry Brow, but that ſome Clouds appeared within his Face; but yet he wiſhed his Brother and his Siſter Joy, and drank a Health to the long Life and Happineſs of his young Nephew: Which as he truly wiſh'd not then, ſo he obſtructed afterwards. But quickly after finding this new Heir gave him a freſh Diſturbance, which he was not willing ſhould be taken notice of, he therefore told his Brother and his Siſter that his Occaſions did now call him home, and ſo begged their Excuſe for his Departure, and returned home again.

CHAP. V.

How Mr. Arthur Truelove *had a Daughter born two Years after his Son: And of the happy Life his Wife and he enjoyed.*

MR. *Nicholas Truelove* being returned home, and reflecting upon the kind Entertainment he had received from his Brother and Siſter, could not but in ſpite of all ill-nature blame himſelf for repining at his Brother's Happineſs; and therefore reſolved for the time to come, that he would ſtifle all thoſe wicked Inclinations that had hitherto diſturb'd him; and accordingly carried it towards them, with all Kindneſs and reſpect which became him, towards ſo kind and good-natured a Brother; ſo that both Families were

(or

(or at leaſt ſeemed to be) happy in each other; and Providence in leſs than two Years afterwards crowned Mr. *Arthur Truelove* and vertuous Spouſe, with a fair Daughter to his lovely Son, to which he gave its Mother's Name, as his young Son had his: So that they looked upon themſelves (and were indeed) as happy as their Hearts could wiſh: His Prudence and good Husbandry increaſing his Eſtate, which ſtill grew more and more, by all he gave away; for ſuch was his extenſive Charity, that he never ſuffered any to go away an hungry from his Door, nor diſcontented neither, as far as he could help it: For he ſtill found the more he gave away, letting Diſcretion always be his Guide, the more his Wealth increas'd upon his Hand. For what he thus diſtributed abroad to ſuch as were fit Objects for his Charity, was like the Seed, which with a liberal Hand being ſhed upon the ground, brought forth a ſuitable Increaſe in its appointed Seaſon. Nor was his vertuous Lady idle in her Station; but being skill'd in the peculiar Vitues of moſt Herbs and Flowers, her Cloſet was a ſmall Apothecary's Shop, from whence on all occaſions ſhe diſpenſed both Food and Phyſick to her needy Neighbours. Whilſt both his vertuous Lady and himſelf thought themſelves happy in each other, and in their little Son and Daughter, in whom and in their Iſſue, they had the Proſpect of a kind of Immortality intailed upon their Family; and did not doubt but their Poſterity might live for many Ages yet to come. But ah how differently do things fall out from what we oft imagine, and other Scenes appear, than what at preſent is within our Proſpect.

CHAP. VI.

How Mr. Arthur Truelove *and his Wife fell ſick; and how his Brother* Nicholas *came to ſee 'em.*

HOw often have we ſeen the Sun (that glorious Ruler of the Day) ſhine with illuſtrious Beams of ſplendent Light, and ſcatter

ſcatter his bright Rays thro' all the Heavens; when on a ſudden ſome envious interpoſing Cloud has robb'd us of its Luſtre, and brought a glooms Darkneſs o'er the World? Juſt ſo it was with Mr. *Arthur Truelove*, for on a ſudden his Health and his Wife's too, were both exchang'd for Sickneſs; both falling ſick, and both of one Diſtemper at the ſelf-ſame-time; but what that was, neither themſelves nor their Phyſicians could determine, but did reſolve it into ſome occult Morbifick Matter, which had been long a breeding, but now came to a Head, and threatned to diſolve their earthly Tabernacle. What after wards enſued made ſome reflect, as if his Brother *Nicholas* had offered ſome foul Play to 'em, at an Entertainment that he gave 'em at his Houſe about three Months before; when out of an Exceſs of Kindneſs, he had 'em up into his Cloſet, and there gave 'em a Dram, which as he ſaid he kept for his own drinking; for tho' they both remained well three Months after, yet there are Poiſons may be ſo prepared as to lie latent ſo long time within their Bodies and yet at laſt as ſurely kill, as if a Sword had pierc'd their very Hearts; and that his Brother and his Siſter ne'r miſtruſted it, can be no Argument; for neither did they in the leaſt imagine how afterwards he dealt with their dear Children; for if they had they ne'r had made him Guardian over 'em. But be that how it will, certain it is, that as theſe vertuous Pair found their Diſtemper attack 'em with renewed Violence, and that it baffled the Phyſicians Remedies, they ſent with all imaginable ſpeed for Mr. *Nicholas Truelove* to come to 'em; who ſeemed to be exceedingly ſurpriz'd at the bad News; and therefore haſtened to go to viſit them.

When Mr. *Nicholas* came into the Chamber, and ſaw in what Condition they both lay, he looked as if he would have fallen down dead, and needed a Phyſitian more than they did; and ſeemed ſo troubled that he could not ſpeak. At laſt recovering himſelf a little (or ſeeming ſo to do) he thus began to ſpeak: *My dear Brother and Siſter, wonder not that you ſee me ſo diſturb'd; for 'tis the moſt heart-killing Sight I ever yet beheld; to ſee you both upon a Bed of Sickneſs, (you whom I love to that degree, not my own Wife and Children are more dear to me) it drives me nigh the Confines of another World! O break my Heart, and let me not ſurvive it!*

Would

Would my own Death might but preserve your Lives, how much shou'd I rejoyce to make the Exchange! But is there nothing that I can do for you? No Help! No Remedy! What shall I do? And thereupon the Tears gush'd out so plentifully, as made the Beholders not to doubt of the sincere Affection he had for 'em. And made his truely loving Brother say, *Pray Brother do not add to my Affliction, by weeping thus for me; my greatest Trouble is to see you grieve thus. As to myself and my dear Wife, we are pleas'd that we shall go together to a World of Happiness, where we shall have no need of any thing that we shall leave behind us. Death is the common Lot of all Mankind, and if it come to us sooner than others, we shall have this Advantage by it, That we shall thereby be the sooner happy; and freed from whatsoever can disturb us. But I have one thing, Brother to request of you, and that is, That you'd take the Charge and Care of my dear Children, for to you Care it is I shall commit 'em.*

To this the seemingly sorrowful Brother reply'd, *That tho' he had said nothing to him, yet that unfeigned Love he always bore to him, would infallibly engage him to take the same Care of his Children, as he would do of his own.* At which the sick Couple being very well satisfied, gave him many Thanks. But their Brother was exceeding earnest with 'em to try further means for their Recovering; and told 'em he hoped to see 'em better the next time he came. And so returned again to his own House; not a little pleased he had so well dissembled with his Brother.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing how Mr. Arthur Truelove *made his last Will, and dying left his Brother* Nicholas *sole Executor, and Guardian to his Children.*

After the return of Mr. *Nicholas Truelove* to his own House, the Physitians employ'd the utmost of their Care for the Recovery of *Arthur* and his Wife; but with no Success; For according to the Poet,

The Doctor cannot always cure the Ill,
Sometimes the Malady's beyond the Skill.

And therefore finding their Illness to increase, and expecting nothing else but to end in Death, he sent for a Notary Publick, and desired him to make his Will, by which he left his

Estate, (which was three hundred Pounds a Year) to his only Son, and five hundred Pounds in Gold, to his only Daughter; to be paid upon her Marriage-day; and in case she dyed before, the said Money to go to her Brother: And if they should both dye before they came to Age, their Uncle should possess the whole. He being also made sole Executor, and Guardian to the Children. This being done, he ordered such of their Friends and Neighbours to be sent for, as they had a mind to see; but his Brother with his VVife and Children came without sending for. To whom he told all that he had done, and then gave several Legacies away, especially to his Brother and his VVife, and each of his Children in particular: And some also to charitable Uses, leaving besides sufficient to recompence his Brother for his Care and Trouble.

This being done, the dying Man calls for the living Remainders of himself, whom he should leave behind him, and so these little Pledges of their mutual Affection being brought them, the Father first, and afterwards the Mother, each took them in their dying Arms, and there embraced them, weeping, (as if their almost now departing and fore-boding Souls, fore-saw that barbarous and inhumane Usage, to which they should hereafter be exposed) there kissing them, and giving them his Blessing, gave them unto his Brother with these VVords, Here Brother, I bequeath into your Hands these harmless Babes of mine, the living Images of your dying Brother, and make it as my last Request, that you would deal by them no otherwise, than you desire Heaven would hereafter deal by you and yours; and so as we may both rejoyce together in another VVorld; where you will ne'r be able to look me in the Face, if you do any otherwise than well, by these my innocent and pretty Children. And—but he had been too earnest in his Speech, and so had spent his Strength to that degree, that now his faultering Tongue could go no farther; which his dear VVife perceiving, thus supplyed his Place: O my dear Brother! You are now the Man to whose Paternal Care we have committed our dear Children; to make 'em happy, or else miserable: And tho' I hope you'll need no other Motive, than the Remembrance of that true Love your Brother always bore you; yet if that ben't sufficient, know, Heaven's all-seeing Eye, will still be over you; and will Reward you, as you deal with them, whether 'tis well or ill. More she'd have likewise said, but that her own Tears prevented her.

The Brother seeing in what Agony they both appeared, as doubting his good Usage, was willing all he could to satisfie 'em, and therefore thus replyed, Doubt not, O Sister, nor you dearest Brother, my Love and Care of these your pritty Babes, when you shall be gone hence: May Heaven deal so with me and mine for ever, as I shall deal with them when you are gone. To which the dying Parents said, Amen; and laying down their Heads, soon after dyed together.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing how Mr. Nicholas Truelove, *coveting his Brother's Estate, resolved to make away the two Children; to which End he hired two Ruffians to murder them.*

NO sooner were the Funerals of the two vertuous and lamented *Truloves* over, and all fitting Care taken for the Disposal of those things, which as Executor, Mr. *Nicholas Truelove* was oblig'd to take care of, as he was Executor; but

but he returns to his own House, and brings his Brother's Children with him, committing them to the care of his own Wife; with whom had he but left 'em (said, they had been happy, and himself less miserable; for the good Woman was as tender over them as their own Mother could have been; making no sort of difference betwixt them and her own Children.

But this kind Usage of hers, did not at all comport with her Husband's Intentions; who from the very hour his Brother dy'd, look'd on the Children with an evil Eye; as being now the only Obstacle which stood 'twixt him and all that was his Brother's: His Wife was troubled to see his great Indifference towards those, to whom she knew him to be under the greatest Obligation to treat with more Regard; and sometimes told him so; but this was only like throwing Oyl on Flames, which does instead of Quenching make it burn the Fiercer. For now the Devil knowing his Heart was all dryed up to Tinder, injects fresh Fire into it; which in a little time consumes it all to Ashes. He was resolved to satisfie his wicked Inclinations, and make his Brother's Estate his own, by taking his Children out of the way; so that the best way to do it; was all he had to think on; which not long after, was thus brought about.

Walking one Day about his Grounds, he saw two Men lye skulking on the ground near an adjoyning Wood, whom Justice long ago had set a Brand upon, so that they had the Law in their own Hands; and who liv'd only by the harms of others; upon the sight of these, whom he well knew, he presently resolved that these should be the Men, whose Hands should set him free from the innocent Cause of his Disturbance, and so makes up to them; at whom they were startled, thinking he rather came to punish them for the Mischiefs they had already done, than to set them upon doing more: But he soon eas'd 'em of their Fears, by telling 'em he had a little Job for 'em to do, which if they'd but perform like Men of Honour, he wou'd reward 'em well: Which they, (before they knew what 'twas) promis'd with all the Oaths imaginable. *It is*, said *Truelove*, *only to take away two Quick set Hedges, that stands between my Brother's Lands and mine*: The apprehensive Rogues soon knew his Meaning, and told him they'd soon grub it up, and make the Passage free. Cou'd this be done without suspition, said the barbarous Uncle, I wou'd reward you with an hundred Marks: They wou'd have cut any Man's Throat for half so many Shillings, immediately undertook to do it with all the Secrecy that cou'd be; if he'd but put them in a way.

Truelove, that he might be the less suspected, resolv'd to counterfeit a Letter, from an Aunt of the young Childrens Mother, that liv'd then at *London*; desiring they might be some time with her; and then instead of carrying them to *London*, they should murther them. In Prosecution of which fatal Vilany, they went to a blind Ale-house about two Miles from his Dwelling, which these Rogues sometimes haunted, and there they writ this Letter, which one of 'em under the Notion of a *London* Carrier, shou'd bring him in the Afternoon.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

How the two Ruffians took the two Children on pretence of having them to London, *and carried them into a great Wood in order to kill 'em: How they two fell out about it, and one kill'd the other; the surviving Villain leaving the two Children in the Wood, where they miserably perish'd with Hunger.*

THE Ruffians, whom *Truelove* had agreed with, came in the Afternoon and brought a Letter to him, to desire the Children might be sent up to *London* to their Mother's Aunt: Which Mrs. *Truelove* wou'd by no means agree to; for she knew none cou'd take more care of 'em than she had dome; but her Husband was resolv'd they shou'd go; their Aunt was a rich Widow, he said, and had no Children of her own, and she'[illegible]ve all she had to 'em, and he'd not be their hinderance.

The next day, all things being [illegible] their pretended Journey, comes the two seeming Carriers with Horses to [illegible], up these harmless Babes towards *London*, who were both very glad they should ride a Cock-horse. And Mrs. *Truelove* having kissed them with as true an Affection as her Husband did in a feigned one, took her leave of them, charging the suppos'd Carriers to have a great Care of 'em, and see they were well us'd.

The Ruffians having got the Babes in their Possession, and the Reward that *Truelove* promised them, rid some Miles towards *London*, the little prating Travellers (who now, poor Innocents! were travelling to their long Home) entertaining their Murtherers with such pritty innocent Discourses, as would even have mollified a Heart of Stone, and softened the Breasts of Tygres, but these were far more hard and savage: At last they came to a great Wood, by which there was a narrow Lane turned out of the Road, into which they went, and there alighting took the poor Children down, and went into the Wood together, the Children talking to them all the while; which made the milder Villian of the two perswade the other to save their Lives, since they had had already their Reward; and that 'twas best to carry them and leave them near some unfrequented Village were somebody might see them and take them in; but this the other Relentless Rogue refused, alledging *Truelove* had paid 'em largely, and therefore upon Honour they were bound to perform their Word: [See what mistaken Notions some Men have of Honour; when nothing can be Honourable, but what is honest, just, and vertuous.] But in this Contest the Quarrel grew so high, that they from Words fell to their Swords, and he that was for killing of the Children, was first killed himself; whilst the poor Babes stood crying by, frighted to see them quarrel. The surviving Villain, after the other's Death, came to the Children, and bid them leave their crying, and go along with him, and he would have 'em where they should have some Victuals; and after he had led them about two Miles farther in the Wood, he bid 'em sit down upon the Grass, and he wou'd bring them presently some Sugar-plumes, and Bread and Butter, with which, the Children being pleased sat down, expecting it accordingly. And there he left these harmless Babes to perish; as surely (tho' not so kindly) killing them, as if he'd cut their Throats. Tir'd with their Journey, and their Expectation of the Man's Return, as it grew dark they fell a crying, which they continued so long till they

they fell asleep; and waking in the Morning, they got up, and sought to get out of the Wood; which when they could not do, they searched for Food, and found some Black-berries, and some few wild Apples, which not sustaining Nature, they soon died with Hunger; and altho' they had none to bury them, the kinder Robin-red-breast buried them with Leaves.

Truelove inform'd by the surviving Villain, that they had murther'd the young Children, six Months after produces a counterfeit Letter from the pretended Aunt in *London*, that his pritty Nephew and Neice, were both dead of the Small Pox, who shew'd as much counterfeit Sorrow as any for their Deaths: And at last got the Estate which he so much coveted.

But tho' he had contriv'd all this so privately, yet Divine Vengeance follow'd him; affrighting Dreams terrifying him in his Sleep, and the Image of the murther'd Children still staring him i'th' Face; and he that egg'd him on to all this Wickedness, now in most horrid Shapes appear'd to him, and threatning every Moment to destroy him. Besides, most of his Cattle dy'd of the Murrain, his Corn was blasted, and his Barns were fired by Lightning; Mildews and Catter-pillars destroy'd all his Fruits; two of his Sons, for whom he coveted his Brother's Lands, were cast away at Sea. His company was hated by all honest Men, and he was forc'd to herd with Rogues and Villains out of meer necessity, amongst whom when he had profusely lavish'd his Estate, he run in Debt, and was cast into Prison, where through Despair, and Want he dy'd unpitied.

Nor did that cruel Mistreant, that left the innocent Children to perish in the Wood, escape deserved Punishment: For he being taken for a notorious Robbery, was convicted and sentenced to dye for the same. And at the place of his Execution, confess'd the Murther of his Fellow rogue, and of his leaving the innocent Children in the Wood, and how he and his Companion were hired to murther them, by their Uncle *Nicholas Truelove*.

The *Norfolk* Gentleman's last Will and Testament, &c.

NOw ponder well, you Parents dear,
these Words which I shall write,
A doleful Story you shall hear,
in time brought forth to light:
A Gentleman of good account,
in Norfolk *dwelt of late,*
Whose Wealth and Riches did surmount,
most Men of his Estate.
Sore sick he was, and like to dye,
no help that he could have;
His Wife by him as sick did lye,
and both possess'd one Grave:

No love between these two was lost, each was to other kind,
In love they liv'd, in love they dy'd, and left two Babes behind.
The one a fine and prity Boy, not passing three Years old,
The other a Girl more young than he, and made in Beauty's Mould:
The Father left his little Son, as plainly doth appear,
When he to perfect Age should come, three hundred Pounds a year.
And to his little Daughter Jane, *five hundred Pound in Gold,*
To be paid down on Marriage-day, which might not be controul'd;
But if the Children chance to dye, e're they to Age should come,
Their Uncle should possess their Wealth, for so the Will did run.
'Now Brother, (said the dying Man,) look to my Children dear,
'Be good unto my Boy and Girl, no Friends else I have here:
'To God and you I do commend, my Children night and day,
'A little while before we have within this World to stay.
'You must be Father and Mother both, and Uncle all in one;
'God knows what will become of them, when I am dead and gone.
'With that bespoke their Mother dear, O Brother kind, quoth she,
'You are the Man must bring my Babes to Wealth or Misery.
'If you do keep them carefully, then God will you reward,
'If otherwise you seem to deal, God will your Deeds regard.
With lips as cold as any stone, he kist the Children small,
'God blesse you both, my Children dear; with that the tears did fall.
These Speeches then their Brother spoke, to this sick Couple there,
'The keeping of your Children dear, sweet Sister, do not fear;
'God never prosper me nor mine, nor ought else that I have,
'If I do wrong your Children dear when you are laid in Grave.
Their Parents being dead and gone, the Children home he takes,
And brings them home unto his House, and much of them he makes.
He had not kept these prity Babes, a Twelve-month and a Day,
But for their Wealth he did devise to make them both away.
He bargain'd with two Ruffians rude, that were of furious Mood,
That they should take the Children young, and slay them in a Wood.
And told his Wife and all he had, he did the Childret send

To

To be brought up in fair London, *with one that was his Friend.*
Away then went these prity Babes, rejoycing at that Tide,
Rejoycing with a merry mind, they should on Cock-horse ride:
They prate and prattle pleasantly, as they rode on the way,
To those that should their Butchers be, and work their Lives decay.
So that the prity speech they had, made Murtherers hearts relent,
And they that took the Deed to do, full sore they did repent.
Yet one of them more hard of heart, did vow to do his Charge,
Because the Wretch that hired him, had paid him very large.
The other would not agree thereto, so here they fell at Strife,
With one another they did fight, about the Childrens Life:
And he that was of mildest mood, did slay the other there,
Within an unfrequented Wood, where Babes did quake for fear.
He took the Children by the hand, when tears stood in their Eye,
And bad them come and go with him, and look they did not cry:
And two long Miles he led them thus, while they for Bread complain,
Stay here, quoth he, I'll bring ye Bread, when I do come again.
These prity Babes with hand in hand, went wandring up and down,
But never more they saw the Man, approaching from the Town:
Their prity lips with Black-berries, were all besmear'd and dy'd,
And when they saw the darksom night, they sat them down and cry'd.
Thus wandred these two prity Babes, till death did end their grief;
In one anothers arms they dy'd, as Babes wanting Relief:
No Burial these prity Babes of any Man receives,
Till Robin-red-breast *painfully, did cover them with Leaves.*
And now the heavy Wrath of God upon ther Uncle fell,
Yea fearful Fiends did haunt his house, his Conscience felt an Hell:
His barns were fir'd, his goods consum'd, his lands were barren made,
His Cattle dy'd within the Field, and nothing with him staid.
And in the Voyage of Portugal, *two of his Sons did dye;*
And to conclude, himself was brought unto much Misery:
He pawn'd and mortgag'd all his land, e're seven years came about;
And now at length this wicked Act, did by this means come out:

The

The Fellow that did take in hand, these Children for to kill,
Was for a Robbery judg'd to dye, as was God's blessed Will;
Who did confess the very Truth of what is here exprest;
Their Uncle dy'd while he for debt, did long in Prison rest.
All you that be Executors made, and Overseers eke,
Of Children that be Fatherless, and Infants mild and meek;
Take you Example by this thing, and yeild to each his Right,
Least God with such like Misery, your wicked Minds requite.

FINIS.